

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 12863 01 OF 02 060004Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-14

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-07 OES-07 DODE-00

SS-15 SP-02 TRSE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 /110 W

-----127621 060042Z /73

R 051729Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0389

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

ERDA WASHDC

ERDA GERMANTOWN

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 12863

DEPT PASS NRC; USEEC, USOECD, USIAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TECH, GW

SUBJECT: GERMAN NUCLEAR MORATORIUM

REF: A. BONN 10760; B. DUSSELDORF 0092; C. BONN 8351

1. SUMMARY: THE GERMAN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS PREPAR-
ING TO DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF A THREE TO FIVE
YEAR NUCLEAR MORATORIUM. THIS WAS DISCLOSED BY
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY
MATTHOEFER AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON AUGUST 4. HE
EXPLAINED THAT THE GROWING OPPOSITION TO THE
FEDERAL NUCLEAR PROGRAM WITHIN THE TWO GOVERNMENT
COALITION PARTIES WOULD LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT NO OTHER
CHOICE THAN TO ACCEPT SUCH A MORATORIUM. END SUMMARY.

2. MATTHOEFER (SPD) EXPLAINED THAT DECISIONS OF
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 BONN 12863 01 OF 02 060004Z

REGIONAL SPD CONVENTIONS MADE IT LIKELY THAT THE UP-
COMING NATIONAL PARTY CONVENTION IN NOVEMBER WOULD
OVERWHELMINGLY ADOPT A POSITION AGAINST ISSUING ANY
MORE REACTOR LICENSES UNTIL THE PLANNED GERMAN NUCLEAR
REPROCESSING CENTER HAS RECEIVED ITS FIRST PARTIAL
CONSTRUCTION LICENSE (EXPECTED IN FROM THREE TO FIVE
YEARS). HE SAID THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COULD NOT

IGNORE SUCH A PARTY DEMAND. FURTHERMORE, THIS VIEW WAS SHARED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF GERMANY'S LARGEST AND MOST INDUSTRIALIZED STATE, NORTH RHINE - WESTPHALIA (REF B), AND THE TRADE UNION FEDERATION (REF C). A CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S NUCLEAR POLICY IS EVEN MORE LIKELY, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE JUNIOR COALITION PARTNER FREE DEMOCRATS (FDP) WERE EXPECTED TO TAKE A SIMILAR POSITION IN THEIR OWN PARTY CONVENTION, SCHEDULED SHORTLY BEFORE THE SPD CONVENTION. AS A STRONG INDICATOR FOR THIS HE POINTED TO AN IDENTICAL DECISION OF THE NATIONAL FDP DIRECTORATE PASSED ON JUNE 25 (REF A).

3. MATTHOEFER IS THE FIRST FEDERAL CABINET MINISTER TO ADMIT THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM EVEN IN ITS REVISED FORM. UNTIL RECENTLY MATTHOEFER AND ECONOMICS MINISTER FRIDRICH, FDP, HAD STATED THAT CERTAIN POLITICAL CONDITIONS MIGHT FORCE A GOVERNMENT TO PARTIALLY IGNORE PARTY DECISIONS. A WEAKENING OF THIS POSITION COULD ALREADY BE OBSERVED, WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT PRESENT ITS REVISED ENERGY PROGRAM BEFORE THE TWO PARTY CONVENTIONS WHICH HAD BEEN EXPECTED FOR THE EARLY SUMMER.

4. MATTHOEFER ALSO TOUCHED UPON THE CONSEQUENCES
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PAGE 03 BONN 12863 01 OF 02 060004Z

THAT A TEMPORARY HALT TO THE FURTHER EXPANSION OF
NUCLEAR ENERGY PRODUCTION WOULD HAVE FOR THE GERMAN

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PAGE 01 BONN 12863 02 OF 02 060003Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 12863

ECONOMY. ALTHOUGH SUCH A MORATORIUM WOULD PRESENT SOME PROBLEMS, HE EXPLAINED, ITS IMPACT WOULD NOT BE SERIOUSLY DETRIMENTAL AND CONSERVATION MEASURES, IN PARTICULAR, COULD SERVE AS MEANS TO OVERCOME THE DIFFICULTIES. HE URGED THAT THE COALITION PARTIES NOT ONLY DECIDE UPON A NUCLEAR MORATORIUM, BUT ALSO RECOMMEND COMPREHENSIVE CHANGES TO THE ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM. THESE, HE ASSUMED, COULD ONLY BE IMPLEMENTED BY SOPHISTICATED AND FAR-REACHING ELECTRICITY PRICE REGULATIONS.

5. OTHER METHODS OF ALLEVIATING THE CONSEQUENCES OF A NUCLEAR MORATORIUM WOULD BE BY INCREASED FOSSIL ENERGY PRODUCTION AND THE UTILIZATION OF ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES. ESPECIALLY IN THE FIELD OF FOSSIL ENERGY, MATTHOEFER SAID, INCENTIVES HAD TO BE OFFERED TO INCREASE INVESTMENT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW
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PAGE 02 BONN 12863 02 OF 02 060003Z

FOSSIL POWER PLANTS WHICH WOULD EMPLOY THE BEST AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGIES.

6. IN AN INITIAL COMMENT, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF KRAFTWERK UNION (KWU), GERMANY'S LARGEST MANUFACTURER OF NUCLEAR REACTORS, WARNED THAT A NUCLEAR MORATORIUM WOULD EVENTUALLY LEAD TO SERIOUS ELECTRICITY BLACK-OUTS AND A TANGIBLE INCREASE IN ELECTRICITY PRICES. IT WOULD ALSO INEVITABLY HAMPER THE GERMAN CHANCES IN THE EXPORT MARKET.

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